

GOGA PLANNING **INTERNAL DRAFT** - October 17, 2014

Dear Assemblymember Ting,

I appreciate you taking the time to write me on behalf of Save Our Recreation. ~~My staff and I understand the importance of listening to the people we serve and so your letter strikes a sympathetic chord.~~ I am familiar with the new General Management Plan for Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), in terms of the direction ~~for management~~ it proposes for management and the opportunities ~~the GGNRA~~ provided for the public to be involved with shaping the plan. The assertions that Save Our Recreation makes—that the GGNRA proposes a dramatic shift away from recreation and that the plan lacked a public airing—are without factual basis.

The new plan builds upon 40 years of enthusiastically supporting recreation, including new and evolving forms such as mountain biking and boardsailing. It outlines an emphatically diverse range of recreational opportunities that will still better continue to serve people eager to enjoy the park, consistent with Congress's ~~motives for intent in~~ establishing the park. The plan ~~is keen to~~ describes how people will be able to enjoy the varied landscapes, and ~~to~~ do so in ways that preserve the park for future generations. I encourage you to review the management zoning maps, ~~sketches~~ and narratives that describe a rich menu of recreational activities in all parts of the park, including areas where resources are highly sensitive.

On their website, Save Our Recreation claims that hiking, surfing, bike riding, and horseback riding will all be denied. ~~This is not the plan that I approved.~~ My colleagues ~~in the~~ GGNRA and I are aware that ~~a segment of some~~ visitors are concerned about forthcoming regulations for visitors who enjoy the park with their dogs. Some suggest that managing dogs in the park constitutes a radical reduction in recreation. I respectfully encourage you to reject the narrowness of that assertion. Is is important to ~~Further, I ask you to~~ recognize that those regulations are not part of the new General Management Plan, but will be part of a separate Dog Management Plan which has its own public process that has also been underway with numerous, well attended public engagement opportunities. The Dog Management Plan, begun in 2002 years ago and now in draft, has always been distinct from the General Management Plan, in part to allow more focused examination of the unique issues of dog walking. Decisions about managing dogs in the park will be made in the Final Dog Management Plan, not the General Management Plan. The Final Dog Management Plan is expected to be completed in late 2015.

The National Park Service considers general management planning as a long term agreement with the American people about how to preserve and provide for recreation on these, their public lands. For this reason, the planning process offers many opportunities for the public to express their interests and help shape the plan. At the GGNRA, these opportunities began with an open-ended questionnaire in 2006 and concluded with 90-day public review period for the draft plan in 2011 that included three public meetings in San Mateo, San Francisco, and Marin Counties. In between those activities, GGNRA's

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planning ~~teamer~~ employed the best professional practices of the planning profession. They held frequent public open houses to allow for discussion, held public planning hikes in park areas, published informative newsletters, and sent periodic updates by email to a growing list of subscribers, always gathering substantial input and offering opportunities for additional dialog. As with many decision-making process about public land, it ~~can be~~ has been challenging to reach all interested parties; however, the public participation process for GGNRA's new General Management Plan has been more than adequate for charting the broad direction for the park.

We are aware of the petition drafted by Save Our Recreation this spring and will take their point of view into consideration as we finalize and implement the General Management Plan and move ahead with the Dog Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. ~~As you are right to expect,~~ I will encourage the Superintendent of GGNRA, Frank Dean, to remain open - as he has been - to meeting you and representatives s from Save Our Recreation about both plans.

Thank you again for your letter. ~~, and kind regards as we work together to earn and keep the public's trust.~~

Sincerely,

Christine Lehnertz

National Park Service

Pacific West Regional Director

cc: Frank Dean